



**Cortland**  
Enlarged City School District

# Budget

## 2021-2022 PROPOSAL

**1.35%**  
BUDGET  
INCREASE

**2.01%**  
TAX LEVY  
INCREASE

**Budget  
Vote**

**May 18, 2021**

Proposed Budget 2021-22

Dear Cortland families and voters,

I hope this Budget Brochure finds you well and that it helps inform your vote on May 18th. Our process each year is an opportunity to thank the community for supporting the children of the district and for continuing to assert the importance of “community” in our work. Please use this resource to become educated about our school district budget and about our fiscal focus for the foreseeable future.



**87%**

of the 2021 graduating  
class had at least ONE  
college course  
completed prior to  
graduation

Our budget process this year began with uncertainty in federal, state, and local budgets. In November and December we faced considerable concerns around high percentage cuts for this school year and for the next few. We began our budget process based on that information. I am pleased to let you know that our outlook changed in January and became clearer by February. During those two months we

worked hard to understand anticipated revenue for 2021-2022 in order to balance our expenses and propose an appropriate budget. I believe we have arrived at a balanced, fair, and sustainable budget proposal for the 2021-2022 school year. Our budget allows the continuation of our strong academic program, with a plethora of elective options for our high school students, instrumental music education beginning at Smith Intermediate School, clubs, sports, and extracurricular activities.

Thank you all for your continued support of the district and our students. Please remember to exercise your right to vote on May 18, 2021.

Robert J. Edwards

**YOUR VOTE COUNTS!**  
**5.18.21**

At-A-Glance

Summary of Propositions.....	2
Facilities Update.....	3
Budget Proposal .....	4
Three Part Budget .....	5
District Highlights .....	6
Board of Ed Candidates.....	7
Voting Information .....	8

PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING • DATE: May 11, 2021 • TIME: 6:30 p.m. LOCATION: HS LGI  
A meeting of the Board of Education to present the proposed 2021-22 budget to the public.

## Proposition #1 – 2021-2022 Budget

To approve the budget of \$50,848,256, which is a 1.35% budget increase and 2.01% tax levy increase maximizing our allowable tax cap.

## Proposition #2 – BUS PURCHASE



Shall the bond resolution adopted by the Board of Education of the Cortland Enlarged City School District on February 23, 2021 authorizing the acquisition of student transport vehicles, including all necessary furnishings, fixtures and equipment, and the expenditure of a total sum not to exceed \$399,000, which is estimated to be the total maximum cost thereof, and further authorizing the issuance of \$399,000 serial bonds to pay the cost thereof; providing that the sum of \$399,000, or so much thereof as may be necessary, shall be raised by the levy of a tax upon the taxable real property of such School District and collected in annual installments as provided by Section 416 of the Education Law; providing that, in anticipation of said tax, obligations of the School District, including installment purchase contracts, may be issued; pledging the faith and credit of said School District for the payment of the principal of and interest on said bonds; determining that the period of probable usefulness thereof and maximum maturity of the serial bonds there for is five years; delegating the power to authorize and sell bond anticipation notes and to fix the details of and to sell serial bonds; containing an estoppel clause and providing for the publication of an estoppel notice, be approved?

What this means:

If the proposition is approved, the district will replace student transportation vehicles, through a purchase program. The anticipated costs of \$399,000 is eligible for approximately \$359,900 in state aid reimbursement. Replacing older, heavily used vehicles that are utilized for student transport, the proposed purchases are part of a five year replacement plan designed to ensure our students are transported on buses that meet the latest safety standards. Eventually, the plan will preserve the resale value of our buses. All large buses are part of a warranty plan that will reduce parts purchases and repair expenses.

## Proposition #3 –

Shall the Cortland Free Library Tax previously approved by the voters of the District be increased from the current \$401,024 to \$408,135 beginning July 1, 2021, to be raised by a tax upon the taxable property of the District in each year for general library purposes and to continue from year to year until modified or repealed by a subsequent vote?

What this means:

Funding for the library passes through the District. The library determines the amount of the proposition.

## STAR Savings

The district provides information to taxpayers regarding the STAR program, but has no input into the STAR program.

### Qualifying Information:

- Primary residence of the homeowner only
- Income guidelines
- Enhanced program for those over 65
- Check vs reduction in tax bill - all properties purchased after 2015 automatically receive a check, those prior may change their election. According to New York State, "Beginning in 2019, the value of the STAR credit savings may increase by as much as 2% each year, but the value of the STAR exemption savings cannot increase." This applies to those receiving the Basic or Enhanced STAR credit.
- More information is available on our website:  
<https://www.cortlandschools.org/teacherpage.cfm?teacher=4230> and also on the State Tax website, <https://www.tax.ny.gov/star/default.htm>



For up to date information visit our website [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org)

## Facilities to support 21st Century learning

### Capital Projects

### Smart School Bond Act Projects

### Annual Capital Outlay Projects

### Annual School Safety Projects

### Regular review and planning for facility needs

### Returning students to the classroom with thoughtful and intentional planning

## FACILITIES UPDATE

### Facilities Update

The Board of Education, as it fulfills its responsibilities for the long-term care of our facilities, is preparing for a capital project to address urgent needs in all of our buildings. Based on the Board's Facilities Committee and on building-based sub committees in all of our schools, the Board has directed its architects and engineers to prepare a project proposal that will maximize state aid and which can be completed without any tax increase. The project will be a combination of infrastructure and program components. The Board has identified October 2021, as the target for a community referendum on the proposal. As the plans become more concrete, detailed information will be shared with the community in newsletters, printed form, and social media.

#### Additionally:

The 2020/2021 Capital Outlay construction work including repairs to the building exterior, concrete repairs and flooring replacements in several classrooms at Barry Primary school is nearly completed.

The 2021/2022 Capital Outlay construction work will be focused to provide opportunities for coding, creativity and collaboration. Remodeling the library into a "makerspace" to address our STEAM initiative, revamping collaborative grouping areas and concrete repair in the front of the building are planned to begin over the summer and into the fall of 2021.

The Safe Schools funds are being utilized for exterior door replacement and the Smart School Bond Act continues to be used for camera upgrades throughout our facilities.

The number of students who will graduate in June of 2021 from  
CECSD with an Associates Degree

21

## Mission Statement

The Cortland Enlarged City School District values all community members as partners in creating a positive learning environment for all students. This environment prepares all students to reach their fullest potential in becoming life-long learners, and successful, contributing members of the society in which they live.

Success is the product of a mutually supportive partnership between the school, family and community. Students and staff take pride and accept responsibility for the school, creating a safe and supportive environment. It is a culture where all are welcomed and accepted and interactions are positive and productive. Our instructional environment is engaging and relevant and reflects the best practices in instructional design and delivery, including 21st Century skills.

It allows teachers to work collaboratively within professional learning communities, promotes student engagement and participation in the school community and challenges and supports students at the individual level. The instructional environment is progressive and authentic through the use of technology and project based learning, promotes independent thinking and ensures teachers and students are continuous, self-directed learners. Our instructional environment uses assessment to drive instruction and results in a higher percentage of students graduating.

88%

of Cortland High School  
Varsity Athletic Teams,  
have over a 90% GPA,  
which qualifies them as a  
NYSPHSAA "School of  
Excellence"

Budget Vote  
May 18, 2021

For up to date information visit our website [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org)



# Investing In Our Students' Futures

## Expenses

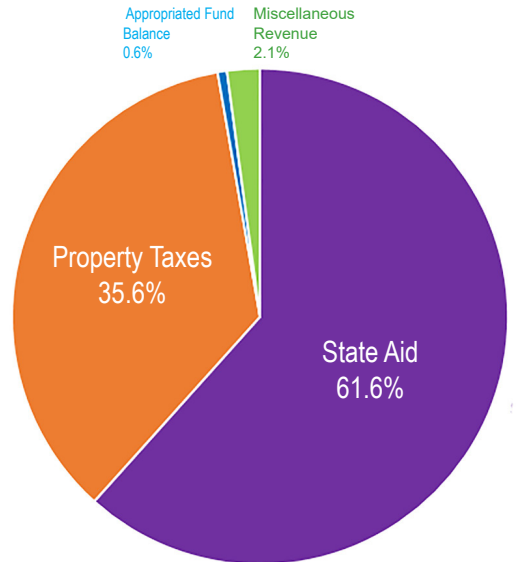
EXPENSES	2020-2021 Actual Budget	2021-2022 PROPOSED Budget
Instruction	\$26,410,691	\$26,653,311
Employee Benefits	\$13,527,192	\$13,944,132
Operations and Maintenance	\$2,765,501	\$2,783,391
Transportation	\$1,193,844	\$1,236,562
District Support	\$1,379,627	\$1,392,076
Debt Service and Transfer	\$4,893,146	\$4,838,785
<b>Expenditure Total</b>	<b>\$50,170,001</b>	<b>\$50,848,256</b>



## Sources of Revenue

Revenue Summary	2020-2021 Actual Budget	2021-2022 PROPOSED Budget
State Aid	\$30,835,771	\$31,347,787
Property Tax Levy	\$17,751,200	\$18,107,360
Appropriated Fund Balance	\$500,000	\$308,359
Miscellaneous Revenue	\$1,083,150	\$1,084,750
<b>Revenue Total</b>	<b>\$50,170,001</b>	<b>\$50,848,256</b>

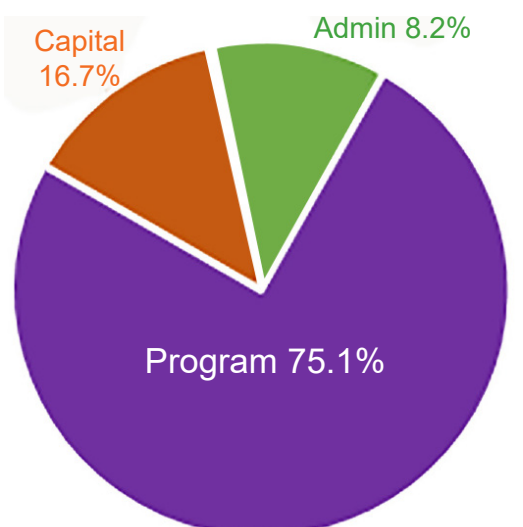
## 2020-21 Revenue Summary



## Budget Summary

<b>Tax Levy Threshold</b>	<b>\$ 18,107,360</b>		
<b>Allowable Increase in Dollars</b>	<b>\$ 356,160</b>		
<b>Allowable Increase in %</b>	<b>2.01%</b>		
<b>2021 - 2022 PROPOSED LEVY</b>	<b>18,107,360</b>		
<b>Actual Increase in Dollars</b>	<b>356,160</b>		
<b>Actual Increase in %</b>	<b>2.01%</b>		
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>2020/2021 Actual</b>	<b>2021/2022 Projected</b>	<b>Year over Year % Change</b>
	50,170,001	50,848,256	1.35%

## 2021-22 Spending Summary



## Reminder: Tax Bill Arrives by 9/1

Tax Bills will arrive by September 1, 2021. The first installment is due by September 30th and the second installment is due in February 2022.



### What happens if the budget is defeated?

If CECSD adopts a contingent budget, the budget will be reduced by \$356,160 for 2021-2022 and the tax levy will remain the same as 2020-2021.

### What is the Three Part Budget composed of?

#### Three-Part Budget

School districts must, by law, divide their budgets into three parts: Administrative, Capital and Program. Each year districts must show how much each part has changed in relation to the whole budget. The three parts are as follows:

#### Administrative Budget Component

These expenditures include office and administrative costs, salaries and benefits for certified school administrators, legal fees, insurance, school board expenses, the business office, and recruitment.

#### Program Budget Component

This portion includes salaries and benefits of teachers and staff that directly work with students and other costs including supplies, technology, textbooks, co-curricular activities, athletics, and transportation.

#### Capital Budget Component

This includes all school bus purchases, debt service on buildings, tax certiorari and court-ordered costs, facility costs (including salaries and benefits of the custodial and maintenance staff), service contracts, maintenance supplies and equipment, and utilities.

### What is a “tax levy limit”?

The tax levy limit is the allowable tax levy a school district can propose, for which only the approval of a simple majority of voters is required. The limit is calculated using a multi-step formula from the New York State Department of Education.

### How is the tax levy different from a tax rate?

The tax levy is the total amount of money the District raises from local taxpayers. The tax rate is the amount of tax residents pay per \$1,000 of property value.

### How is my tax bill calculated?

Individual tax bills are calculated using:

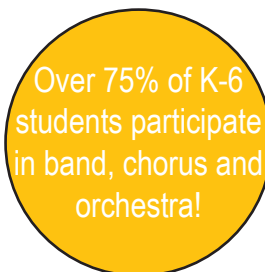
1. The Tax Levy from the school district approved by district voters at the May budget vote.
2. The Equalization Rate set by New York State. New York State balances property values in different townships and sets the rate in August.
3. The assessed value of properties as set by the Tax Assessors in each town in June.
4. Applicable Exemptions such as the STAR credit for the main residence of the homeowner.

### Example of a tax bill

If my property has an assessed value of \$70,000, and the projected tax rate is \$17.70 per \$1,000 of assessed value my tax bill will be approximately \$1,239 not including exemptions.

Formula:

$$(\text{Tax rate/thousand}) \times \text{assessed value} \\ (\$17.70/\$1,000) \times \$70,000 = \$1,239$$



Budget Vote  
May 18, 2021

This is the third year all students, grades K-12, have breakfast and lunch provided for them because of the District's participation in the Community Eligibility Program.

Superintendent Edwards hit the ground running and began his weekly "Video Blasts" that explored educational techniques and lessons across the district.

Food Services managed to make on the fly changes to accommodate district wide remote learning situations due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In-person learning five days per week offered all year long during the national pandemic.

All students, in-person and remote, have a computer assigned to them to use in their learning.

Students who needed Internet access at home were loaned a personal hotspot.

Social-Emotional Learning was completed at all five schools.

The Auditorium Project is complete and has been used extensively this school year. It's afforded the music program with large spaces in which to conduct socially-distanced band and chorus.

The Positivity Project continues to be used in all schools across the District on a weekly basis.

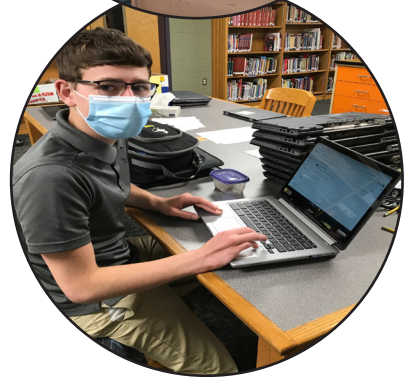
The Board of Education welcomed a student member to represent students in the district.

Tiger Techs (paid student interns) became certified to work on and repair the laptops used by students across the district.

Wifi has been expanded beyond the school walls to provide access to fans and athletes in the stadium and the exteriors of all schools as well as on several buses that make long distance runs.

A Cortland Senior continued to expand the Purple Pantry, a needs based food support system for students and families in the district. Cortland ECSD staff have supported the Pantry with repeated donations.

The Cortland Video Club produced several Education Live television programs, providing the community with invaluable information about the district's programs.



## Stay Connected

FOR THE 2021-2022 SCHOOL YEAR, CECSD will utilize several ways to keep in touch.

**SchoolTool** -- Schooltool is a program that allows students and parents online access to personalized information about a student's academic program and progress. From student attendance to report cards and progress reports, Schooltool allows for better communication from school to home.

**SchoolMessenger** -- SchoolMessenger allows CECSD and all of the schools within the District to send messages via phone and email to parents and staff, allowing you to stay up to date on school events, emergency situations, closings and delays, etc. Only parents, guardians, or anyone who is designated as an emergency point of contact will receive these notifications.

**Twitter, Facebook & Instagram**-- We continue to use Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to update the community on exciting things that are happening at CECSD. Our twitter accounts are: @CECSDistrict, @CECSD\_Athletics, @CECSD\_Music, @CECSD\_Theatre, @CECSD\_Art, @CECSD\_HS, @CECSD\_JH, @CECSD\_Randall, and @CECSD\_Smith, and @CECSD\_Barry. Our instagram accounts are: @CECSDistrict and @CECSD\_SH.

For up to date information visit our website [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org)



# MEET THE BOARD OF EDUCATION CANDIDATES

7

The following candidates have submitted their names to run for one of four seats up for election on the CECSB Board of Education. For more information about the Board of Education, please visit our website at [www.cortlandschools.org/BOE](http://www.cortlandschools.org/BOE).



**Brett Barnes** I'm a native of Cortland NY. I went to school in the Cortland City School District from 1976 through my graduation in 1988. I attended college in NY and then moved out of state for a few years for my education and career in technology. After a few years I moved back to NY. I continued in technology in the Northeast and New England. I started a family in upstate NY. My wife passed away suddenly and I moved back to Cortland in 2007. I have been here since and have been very involved in the community. I have been involved with youth music for the last 6-7 years and president of the Music Boosters for 5.



**Donald Chu** Two years ago, I ran for a seat on the Board because I believe that public schools improve the quality of life. People choose to live where their children will have the best chance of success, and businesses come to places with a skilled workforce. It's also nice just to see kids at recess or walking to school. Since then, I have tried to listen to district residents, support school staff, provide activities for students, learn how the district operates and work with fellow board members. There is still a lot to do, and I would be happy to keep trying. Thank you.



**Christine A Gregory** A friend of mine recently wrote a book about teaching. As I read her book, "A Place in the Staff," I remembered all the reasons I decided to become a teacher. Her words resonated deeply ... "teachers are superheroes" ... they have the power "to teach a child and potentially affect the course of history!" Teachers "get to cultivate a generation of thinkers, foster curiosity" and help students discover the magic and potential within each of them. Teachers "have the superpower to literally change lives." For forty-two years I have had the privilege of teaching thousands of young people at our Junior-Senior High School. These years went by much too quickly. I never thought of myself as a "superhero." I was just driven by the desire to make a difference in the lives of my students, and by doing so, leave the world a better place.

Retirement from my teaching career in 2014 proved to be a pivotal point in my life. My passion and commitment to education and to the children in our school district didn't end when I walked out of my classroom for the last time. I realized that retirement offered me the time to continue to serve our community. So, in 2015 I made a decision that changed my life forever. I decided to run for a position on our School Board. For two terms I have had the honor to oversee the education of our community's most valuable asset, our children.

I am now asking for the residents in our school district to elect me to a third term ... another three years for me to continue to be an advocate for our teachers, staff, families, and most importantly, for our children. School Board service is complicated and full of legal, financial and other important issues. That's why I have made it a priority (over the past six years) to attend as many trainings and workshops as possible. Last month, as part of their Recognition Program, I was honored by the New York State School Boards Association with a Level 3 Board Mastery Award for participation in various training activities, legal workshops, webinars, and other convention-related events.

If re-elected, I will continue my involvement on the Parker School Task Force. I will also be able to participate on a Commissioner's Roundtable (with School Board members from around the State), hosted at the State level by New York's Commissioner of Education, Dr. Betty A. Rosa. Furthermore, I will become a Board member of Onondaga Cortland Madison BOCES. I am looking forward to this additional role at OCM BOCES and an additional opportunity to be involved at the State level as well.

Almost fifty years of my life have been dedicated to education, our children, and our community. As George Couros said ... "Change has been thrust upon us." As we transition back to in-person schooling in the fall, we will be facing unsettling challenges ... many will impact us for years to come. I hope, with your support, to have the honor to continue serving on the School Board. I will commit all my efforts to help our district face and overcome the many challenges that lie ahead of us.

For up to date information visit our website [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org)



**Lauren Mossotti-Kline** is a current member of the Cortland Enlarged City School District Board of Education. She was appointed to fill a vacant seat in October of 2020 and has served in that role since. She's running again with the intent to serve a three-year term and continue the work she's been committed to during this school year. Lauren is currently the Chair of the Communications Committee and the Legislative Advocacy Liaison to the New York State School Boards Association's (NYSSBA) Government Relations team.

Lauren is married to a Cortland High School graduate and together they have three children, ranging from 4th grade to 12th. She was an active volunteer in elementary classrooms when her children were young and has continued to be an advocate for excellence in education and extra-curricular activities at all grade levels. When asked about her favorite part about serving on the Board, she shared, "It's difficult to choose just one aspect of the work. I truly believe that education not only enhances the future of each child, but also has the potential to impact the greater community. It's quite humbling to be able to contribute to the leadership of our district's future."

During her time on the Board, Lauren has participated in conferences and trainings on governance processes, goal setting models, key communication strategies and more gaining valuable insight on how to best advocate for the school community. Lauren also serves as a Trustee for the Cortland Free Library, as a member of the Board of Directors for Citizens Concerned for Children, Inc., and is a member of the Panhellenic Advisory Council at Cornell University.



**Eugene Waldbauer** My desire to continue on as a School Board member is the result of our successes over the past three years. Predominately, we have finally eliminated the unsustainable reliance on financial reserves for the first time in many years. I joined the Board three years ago to promote and continue the positive experiences both my wife and I had while attending school in Cortland and as parents experiencing our children's growth in the District. After leaving the community and living in various places on the West Coast for a decade, we had our first child and we knew that Cortland was the place we wanted to raise our family. Moving back home was a great decision. To support our community I've completed terms on the Town of Cortlandville Planning Board, I've once again become a County Legislator, and I look forward to continuing on as a member of our School Board.

Having served three years on the Board of Education I've learned that the complexities of decisions and our differing perspectives are typical of an organization of this size. The team members who choose to serve, sacrifice many hours volunteering to make decisions that are sometimes very difficult and sometimes not popular with everyone – Students, Staff, Teachers, Parents, and the Taxpayers. The challenges that we face are not unique to Cortland but common in most New York State Schools. We are wrestling with enhancing the education of our youth while struggling with decreasing State Aid and declining enrollment. Some tough decisions will continue to need to be made in the coming years and I feel that I can be a voice of experience and reason to help the district continue what's good and make improvements where possible.

I would appreciate your vote. Thank you.

## BUDGET VOTE • May 18, 2021

### How To Vote

#### How To Vote

Qualified voters of the District may obtain applications for an absentee ballot from the office of the Clerk of the District. Completed applications must be received by the Clerk of the District no later than 5:00 p.m. on May 17, 2021, and must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on May 11, 2021 if the absentee ballot is to be mailed to the voter. Completed applications received after 4:00 p.m. on May 11, 2021 will require the voter to personally appear at the office of the Clerk of the District to receive an absentee ballot.

#### Polling Locations

##### City:

Ward	School District	Location	Address
1-8	1	Kaufman Center	1 Valley View Drive

##### Cortlandville, Lapeer, Harford, Virgil:

LD/ED/Town	School District	Location	Address
12-1 CT	9	Cortlandville Town Hall	Terrace Road
13-3 & 4 CT	9	Cortlandville Town Hall	Terrace Road
14-6 CT	9	Cortlandville Town Hall	Terrace Road
18-1 LA	10	Virgil Town Hall	1176 Church Street, Virgil
19-1 HA	10	Virgil Town Hall	1176 Church Street, Virgil
19-2 VI	10	Virgil Town Hall	1176 Church Street, Virgil



For more CECSD news and information, visit the district website: [www.cortlandschools.org](http://www.cortlandschools.org)